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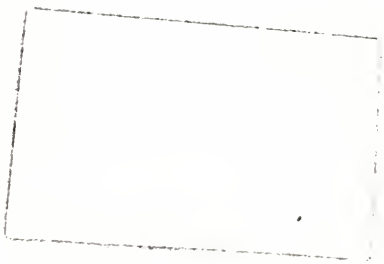
JOSHUA MERRILL AND FAMILY.

A FAMILY RECORD.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

This brief record of the life and family of our parents has been prepared and printed as an expression of our respect for their memory, and also as a convenience and help to the members of the several branches of the family who may desire the information it contains, and may wish to preserve the same for their children and their children's children. It is not intended as a biography nor is it for the public. It is simply a family record, prepared with care, and printed for private circulation among the relatives.

S. M. Merrill.
J. W. Merrill.

Chicago, January, 1899.

Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God shall give thee.

JOSHUA MERRILL AND FAMILY.

I.

Origin of the Name and Family.

IT is natural that every one who leads an upright life in this world should desire that those who come after him should have the means of tracing his ancestry and of identifying his posterity and his kindred. What would some of us not give to have in possession an accurate genealogical record of our families for a few generations past.

With a view to be helpful in this respect to those who inherit the name and blood of the subject of this sketch, the facts and traditions following are recorded as they have been ascertained and verified with considerable labor.

The name Merrill, according to the best information now in reach, originated in the French-speaking Cantons in Switzerland several hundred years ago. It is

said that the meaning of the word whence it was derived was *blackbird.* The picture of this bird appears on the coat-of-arms of some of the families which attained distinction in the early years of their sojourn in England. The original form of the name, and that still prevalent in Switzerland, was *Merle.* The Rev. J. H. Merle, D. D., the learned author of the History of the Reformation, D'Aubigne's history, is an example. So far as tradition reports, the original stock were protestants of the most pronounced type, of Huguenot blood, and in common with others of their faith, suffered persecution from the bigoted and dominant Romanists. Under the severities which prevailed prior to the revocation of the edict of Nantes, some of them were driven from their native country and found refuge in England, where the name was anglicised and took its present form.

The first of the name known to have come to this country were two brothers, John and Nathaniel, who settled at Newburyport, Massachusetts, in 1634. Both were married and reared families, but John had no son to perpetuate the name

and his only daughter who grew to womanhood, married Stephen Swett, so that none of the Merrills trace their descent from him. The immigrant Nathaniel was more fortunate in this respect, as he had five sons who grew to manhood, and each was blessed with a family of respectable size. He also had one daughter, Susannah, and possibly one or two others whose names are not known. His wife was Susannah Jourdaine, and his sons were named respectively, John, Abraham, Nathaniel, Daniel and Abel. From these five have descended nearly all who bear the name of Merrill in the United States. The stock is very numerous, some being found in nearly every state in the Union; and yet those bearing the family name are only a portion of the posterity of Nathaniel, representing the male lines of descent from him, while it is reasonable to suppose that those descending through females and bearing other names are scarcely less numerous.

There are, however, in this country a few families of the name who have more recently come from England, or who trace their lineage in England through persons

who immigrated at a later date than 1634, but there is scarcely room to doubt that those who came first were of the same stock as those who remained in England, some of whose descendants have come over within later years. The early traditions of the families in England and of those in America point to a common origin. The slight variation in spelling the name in this country in no wise indicates a different line of descent. Some spell it Merrell, but those who use the *e* in the last syllable trace their ancestry to those who write it Merrill, which is clearly the form of the original English name.

As nearly as the facts can be ascertained from records and traditions of a trustworthy character, Joshua Merrill, whose family is herein traced, was a descendant of Abel, the fifth son of Nathaniel, the immigrant. This Abel was born at Newbury, Mass., in 1646. He married Priscilla Chase, daughter of Aquilla and Ann (Wheeler) Chase of Newbury, February 10, 1670. His first son was also named Abel, and was born December 28, 1671. This second Abel, the grandson of Nathaniel, married Abigail Stevens, June

19, 1694, and lived at West Newbury till 1759, when he died. His children were Samuel, Abel, Abigail, Thomas, Martha, John, Priscilla, and Nathaniel. The first son, Samuel, was born September 13, 1695. There is no record accessible giving information as to whom or when he married; but his children were Ruth, Daniel, Samuel, Joshua, Sarah, Abel and William--twins, born December 19, 1731, and both died in June 1737. The eighth child was born June 29, 1735, and while the name is not in the record there is good reason to suppose it was a son, and named Nathaniel. The ninth child was born April 7, 1740, and was named William, the same as one of the twins which died in 1737.

This William, the youngest child of Samuel, is the one in whom interest centers in this outline narrative, as the best tradition available makes him the father of Joshua, the subject of this sketch.

There are several facts and circumstances which favor the correctness of this tradition, rendering any mistake in the identification next to impossible notwithstanding the absence of positive proof

or of any record of an official character. Among the things distinctly remembered by Joshua's children, is the fact that in his father's family a younger son was named for a deceased brother, and the impression prevails that the younger son so named was Joshua's own father. Joshua named his first-born William, after its grandfather. This child lived only two or three years. After its decease another son was born, and it was also named William. Some of the neighbors were superstitious on this subject, and criticised Joshua's action in naming a child after a deceased brother, and insisted that it would not live long, perhaps not longer than the one for whom it was named. His satisfactory answer was that his own father did not die young. Thus there were two Williams among Joshua's children, and he often referred to the fact that the same was true of the family in which his father belonged. Then, in addition to this very striking fact, it is certain that Joshua's children have it from their father that his father's name was William, that he was born in Massachusetts, that he did not marry till well along in life, that he

married a Miss Whiteman, of German descent, that her first name was Anstina, and that his parents moved at an early day from Massachusetts, and settled in Grafton county, N. H., when the country was yet new. They also have a distinct recollection that their father often spoke of his father having served in the war of the Revolution, not as a regular soldier in the continental army, but as a "minute man"--a member of a militia organization liable to be called out in emergencies, and so armed and drilled as to be ready to respond to a call at a minute's notice.

All the traditions with regard to the marriage and military services of this William, the ninth child of Samuel, have been so clearly verified by recent investigation in the records concerning the war, that there can scarcely be a doubt as to his identification as the father of Joshua, although the record of his marriage to Anstina Whiteman cannot be found.

It is well established that Christian William Whiteman was one of a colony of Germans who settled in Massachusetts, upon a grant of land known as the

Lexington grant, where Ashburnham now stands; and his third daughter, born July 24, 1758, was named Anstina; that Mr. Whiteman and his family were dismissed by letter from the Congregational church in Ashburnham in 1796, and commended to the fellowship of the church at Haverhill, New Hampshire; and that this family settled in Grafton county, N. H., some six or eight miles from Haverhill. It is also clear that some of the children of Christian William Whiteman were in New Hampshire as early as 1783. William Merrill and Anstina Whiteman were married about 1778, but whether before or after their removal from Massachusetts is not known, but it is probable, from the military service rendered in Massachusetts by William Merrill, that he did not leave that state till after his marriage, and near the close of the Revolutionary war, and possibly not till 1783. Stevens Merrill and his brother Joshua settled in Grafton county about 1778, and it seems that some Massachusetts people accompanied or followed them, among them some of the Whiteman family, so that when William Merrill, with his wife

Anstina, possibly originally spelled Anisthena, established their home there, they were surrounded by old neighbors and relatives from Massachusetts.

Whatever there is of conjecture in the foregoing statements and suppositions, accords well with all the records that have been found concerning these families, and harmonizes all the traditions remembered by their descendants. A gentleman in New Hampshire who has spent considerable time and labor in looking up the genealogy of the Merrill family, after having examined the records of several counties and numerous churches, writes: "I think that I have ascertained that William, son of Samuel, was a revolutionary soldier, serving eight months in the siege of Boston, in Capt. Levi Spaulding's company, Col. James' Regiment. In 1776 he was lieutenant in Capt. Daniel Emerson's company, in Col. Wingate's regiment. These I believe were minute men. Then again in 1777, we find him in Captain Ford's company, which enlisted and marched at the alarm at Ticonderoga." This is a brief record, but it answers completely to the statements of Joshua

cencerning the relation of his father to the war of Independence, as these are remembered by his children. Then it is assumed that in accordance with the above, that William Merrill, son of Samuel, at the age of about thirty-eight years, married in Massachusetts before the war of the revolution was over, and shortly after moved into what was then called the Cohoes country, and settled in Grafton county, New Hampshire, not far from the village of Haverhill. Here almost under the shadow of the lofty Moosilauke, at whose base were other hills less majestic, yet approaching the dignity of mountains, and in sight of the beautiful valley of the Connecticut, he cleared his land, builded his house and made his home. Here his children were born and reared, and from this rural home they went forth into the world to found other homes, and to seek their fortunes under the allotments of Providence.

II.

His Early Life.



NFORTUNATELY the family record of William and Anstina Whiteman Merrill is not known to be in existence. All the information in reach is from remembered statement of Joshua concerning his parents, his brothers, and his only sister. These statements are trustworthy, because they are distinctly remembered by all the older children in his family.

So far as known, William and Anstina Merrill had but four children, three sons and a daughter. All these grew up at home, and married in that section, except Joshua, whose career is to be followed in the west. Their names were Stephen, Richard, Hester and Joshua. Hester married a Mr. Willoughby, but whom the others married is unknown to Joshua's children, although he undoubtedly mentioned many times the names of the families into which his brothers married.

They all lived in Grafton county as late as 1813, but how long they remained there after that or what became of them is not known. A terrible epidemic, known as the "spotted fever," prevailed in that section with wonderful fatality in 1815, sweeping off in many instances entire families, and it is not improbable that some of the family fell victims to the scourge. There is, however, a fairly well authenticated tradition that all who survived the plague sold their possessions shortly after the epidemic subsided, and moved into Maine, then a new and opening country into which many people were going.

Joshua, the youngest child of this family, was born April 8, 1791. He lived at the home of his parents till he was twenty-one years of age, pursuing such occupations as life on a farm required, enjoying only such advantages for education as the country school afforded, which at that time seldom lasted more than three months in the year. His memory of his boyhood life was always vivid, and through many a pleasant hour have his children been entertained with his reci-

tations of his experiences and adventures; his amusements and pranks; his excursions for hunting and fishing; his trips with his father to Boston, mostly by sled in winter, with produce; his fright from being chased from the woods by a black bear with a white face; his visit among his cousins in Vermont, and over on the Merrimac; and with his achievements in heaping logs to burn for pearlash, and in mowing grass in the meadows so smoothly that the swaths could not be traced. His allusions to his parents were always reverential. To the end of his life he cherished for their memory the highest filial regard. Evidently they taught him by precept and example to fear God and keep his commandments. Judging from his testimony, his father possessed a high sense of honor, and was a man of stern integrity, and maintained family discipline with a firm hand; while his mother was modest, industrious and godly, according to the orthodox standard of the puritan times.

One year after Joshua's majority terminated his connection with his home and with the scenes of his youth. Just at that

time there was urgent demand for soldiers for the war then in progress with Great Britain—the war of 1812. Patriotically responding to what seemed to be the call of duty, he left his father's house, and walked to the capital of the state, and enlisted in the army of the United States. In a short time he was off for duty in the field, and as events turned, he never again looked upon the face of one of his family, and never again visited his native place. This was undesigned on his part, as it was not till several years that circumstances constrained him to indefinitely postpone his return, and induced him to settle in the west. His first enlistment in the army was for six months, which term he served faithfully, and would have gone back home according to his original intention, but for the fact that at the end of his first enlistment, an acquaintance in the army who was married, was exceedingly anxious to get home to his family, and prevailed with the young man to take his place for another six months. Joshua having become familiar with the duties of the soldier, and accustomed to army life, accepted the proposition cheer-

fully, and greatly to the relief of his friend. But it proved to be the turning point of his life. Had he retired at the end of his term, he would have gone back to New Hampshire, as was his expectation when he started away, and received the greetings of his family and kindred, and in all probability would have settled in sturdy New England.

To trace the history of his life in the army is not necessary to the design of this writing, although some thrilling scenes and narrow escapes would be encountered in following his experiences through the year spent in the service. He was successively under the command of Generals Hampton, Wilkinson and Brown, his regiment being part of the northern army employed in the attempts made at the invasion of Canada, and in defending our northern borders, operating mostly against Indian and French-Canadian forces. He took part in numerous skirmishes, and had some perilous marches and adventures, but was not engaged in any great battle, although his regiment was in the bloody battle of Lundy's Lane only a few weeks after he left it. When the time of

his engagement with the army expired, he was in the vicinity of Niagara Falls, and he left in company with a comrade from the same section of country, with whom he had arranged to visit what was then the far west, before returning to New Hampshire. The two footed it across the country to Olean Point, on the Allegheny river, where they took a flat-boat for Pittsburg. Their immediate destination was Cincinnati, Ohio. Accordingly they sought conveyance down the Ohio river, and made the journey part of the way on a flat-boat, and part of the way on a lumber raft. The probability is that they found opportunity to pay their way by their services. It was not at all beneath the dignity of vigorous young men just out of the army to work their passage, and there is little doubt that they did it, although positive information on this point is not now at hand.

In due time they landed in Cincinnati, while the war was yet in progress, sometime in 1814; but Joshua did not again enter the army. He did, however, engage for a time with a pack-horse company, which was carrying supplies to

troops in the northwest, in the direction of Fort Wayne. He went only as far as Dayton, Ohio, when for some reason the expedition was abandoned, and he returned to Cincinnati. He then traveled in Kentucky and Indiana for some time, seeing what he could of the country and of pioneer life, till it became necessary for him to recruit his finances by going to work. He took employment on the farm of Gen. W. H. Harrison, at North Bend, Ohio, where he continued for nearly a year, making the crop for the General, who was away at the head of the army in the Northwest most of the time. During this time he saved his earnings with a view to the journey back to New Hampshire, which he intended to make the following season. This was then a long journey because of the lack of facilities for travel; but, by working his way up the river on a keel-boat as far as Wheeling or Pittsburg, and walking over the mountains, and then taking canal boats and stages as the lines might reach in the right direction, he could expect to accomplish the journey in about two months, and with an outlay of

money not to exceed the cost of the trip at the present time.

Another turning point in his life was now reached. The time for the journey came, but it was not undertaken. When he was about ready to start, an attack of ague arrested his preparations, and disabled him for some months. His expenses during this period of sickness exhaused his means, and made it necessary for him to give up the trip for the time being, and go to work again. This he did, reluctantly, of course, but under the circumstances the duty was imperative. In looking about for employment his attention was drawn to the newly laid out capital of the state of Ohio, the city of Columbus, where there was demand for working men. With a tinge of sadness, because of the failure of his plans to return to the home of his childhood, yet with a courageous purpose to make his way, he went to Columbus and found employment. He contracted to clear a piece of ground adjacent to the city, and sold the wood chopped upon it to the state government for the use of the public offices. It is a tradition that he chop-

ped and furnished the wood that warmed the first legislature that met in the new capital city.

While thus employed other thoughts took possession of his mind, assisting materially to reconcile him to his disappointment about returning home, and causing him to indefinitely postpone that contemplated journey. He took unto himself a wife, and concluded to make his home in Ohio. He was married to Miss Rhoda Crosson, in Columbus, Ohio, February 1, 1816, by Rev. James Hoge, pastor of the First Presbyterian church of that city.

III.

His Wife's Family.



HE marriage of Joshua Merrill opens a new chapter in his history, and makes it necessary for his children to turn attention to another line of ancestry, tracing as well as possible the family of the one who joined her fortunes with his, sharing his joys and sorrows, and in the relation of wife and mother, did her part nobly in the battle of life, and in rearing the children that blessed their union.

In the middle of the last century there was a family in Pennsylvania named Samson, or Sampson; for it is not certain whether it was spelled with a *p* or without it, and that is not important. There were several daughters in the family, one of which was named Cornelia, who married Samuel Crosson, and settled in what was then Bedford county, near the

village of McConnellsburg. Of the early history of the Crossons little is known, save in the form of traditions which are not very full nor very definite. It is certain, however, that they came from Ireland to Pennsylvania at an early day. But the one in whom we are now interested was a native of this country; and we cannot be certain whether his parents or grand parents were immigrants. One of the traditions kept alive is to the effect that one of the ancestors of those who came to this country was a Jew, born in Palestine,--so the tradition has it, but it is not improbable that it was the German Palatinate, from which country quite a colony at one time settled in Ireland, many of whom afterwards came to America,--who was employed in some capacity in the British civil service, settled in Ireland, and subsequently married outside of his race and his religion, and became one of the ancestors of he Crossons, the family under consideration. This Jew was either the grandfather or the great great-grand father of Samuel Crosson, who married Cornelia Sampson. Thus a tinge of Jewish blood mingles with the Teutonic and

Celtic in the descendants of Joshua and Rhoda Crosson Merrill; for Samuel Crosson and his wife Cornelia, were the parents of Rhoda, who married Joshua Merrill.

Samuel Crosson died after he had passed the meridian of life, and but few facts concerning him have come to the knowledge of the present generation of his descendants. Like the father of Joshua Merrill, he spent some of the earlier years of his manhood in the service of his country, fighting the Indians, during the French and Indian wars; and later, served a term of three or more years during the war of the revolution. These facts coming to the children of Joshua Merrill from their mother, have been corroborated by her sisters and a brother whom some of these children met after her death. They also distinctly remember that she spoke of her father as being somewhat infirm, which he laid to his exposure and hard service in the army.

His wife was left a widow with a large family of growing children, to whose welfare she devoted the energies of her life. Three sons and six daughters grew

to manhood and womanhood, all testifying to the excellence of their motherly training, fulfilling the Scriptural assurance that the children of the godly woman shall rise up and call her blessed.

Cornelia Sampson Crosson, after remaining a widow several years, married Mr. James Rowen, who died only a few years after this marriage, and left her again in widowhood. She subsequently married Mr. Ezekiel Smith, with whom she lived till his death, which occurred not a great while after their marriage, and thus she was for a third time left a widow. After the death of Mr. Smith, she left her old home in Pennsylvania, and removed to Belmont county, Ohio, in the neighborhood of where some of her children had previously settled, and where she closed her earthly pilgrimage.

In Ohio she was known simply as the widow Smith. She was a Methodist from early life. It is a matter of regret that we have not the account of her conversion. While her children were yet young she was in the habit of going four or five miles to class meeting, taking a child or two along with her. When advanced in

years she was widely known in church circles as a pioneer Methodist, was highly ly esteemed, and was a regular attendant at the quarterly meetings of the circuit, where she was always cordially welcomed. It was at a quarterly meeting a few miles from her home, in October, 1842, that she met her death. She was being entertained at the house of a farmer who had built an addition to his residence, the new part being plastered and very close, and as yet without provision for heating. When at night the old lady retired to her room, the good people being anxious to make her as comfortable as possible, thought to remove any chill or dampness from the room by a temporary device, the nature of which they did not understand. They filled a large metal oven with live coals from the fire-place, and set it in her room and closed the door. In the average farm house of the time, with an open chimney, the experiment would not have been dangerous; but in the close room, newly plastered, it was fatal. She dropped into sleep, and the carbonic gas generated in the oven produced asphyxia, and she slept to wake no more

in this world. She was found dead in the morning, having passed away without a struggle, and seemingly without any consciousness of suffering. Her death caused quite a sensation in the community. Years afterwards it was said that her funeral was the largest ever known in that section of the country. She was buried in the cemetery in the rear of the small brick Methodist Episcopal church, at Burton's Station, six miles east of Barnesville, Belmont county, Ohio, where she awaits the trumpet's call.

Her oldest son, Nehemiah, settled in Belmont county, Ohio, where his family grew up, and where he died at an advanced age, approaching eighty. He was noted for his great size and strength. He measured six feet and seven inches in height, and weighed three hundred and fifty pounds, and being muscular in proportion, and not very fleshy, he was physically a powerful man, and unusually active. His later years brought considerable disability, as his feet and ankles seemed to fail because of the great weight they had borne so long. He had only a son and daughter. His son, Thomas B.

Crosson, was married, and lived in Guernsey county, Ohio, for quite a number of years; a miller by trade, and a local preacher in the Wesleyan connection. His place of residence for a few years past has not been known to the writer. Nehemiah's daughter, Margaret, married a man named Harvard Jordon, and reared a large family. She lived near Barnesville, Ohio, for some years, and subsequently moved to Kansas, where she was living at last accounts.

The other sons of Mrs. Crosson, Thomas and Samuel, remained with their mother till about their majority, and then went out to do for themselves, but soon became separated from each other and from the rest of the family, so that nothing definite is known of their later lives or of their families. The daughters all lived to mature life, and all married and reared families, most of them large families.

Sarah married Charles Brooks. With her husband she moved to Columbus, Ohio, when that city was very new. They were among the first settlers. After residing there a few years, they removed

to Union county, in the same State, and settled some three miles from Marysville, where, a few years later, she sickened and died. She was buried in the cemetery adjoining the grounds on which stands the Methodist Episcopal church known as Amrine's chapel, one-and-a-half miles from Marysville. She left several children. Her husband, Mr. Brooks, subsequently married again and moved west, taking his children with him. It is thought he settled in Indiana, but correspondence with him in some way was not resumed, and the history of himself and children, after his removal is unknown. He was an exhorter in the Methodist Episcopal church, and the impression prevails, without being able to trace it to exact information, that he became a local preacher.

Rachel Crosson married James Alexander, and they settled in Washington county, Ohio, at Moss Run, about twelve miles from Marietta. They were blessed with a large family of children. The Alexanders were farmers in business and style. Their children grew up, and most of them were in the same vicinity

when last heard from. Both Mr. and Mrs. Alexander are buried near where they lived the greater part of their married life.

Anna Crosson married Andrew Jenkins. He was a blacksmith by trade, and settled in Belmont county, Ohio, not far from where Nehemiah Crosson lived, and only a few miles from where the mother died. They had two sons and six or seven daughters. The older son died in early manhood, without being married. The second son, Joseph, lived to middle life, followed the trade of his father, studied and was admitted to the bar as a lawyer, but never practiced; served in the army, was wounded while in service against the Indians in the Rocky Mountain regions, returned measurably disabled, and went to Tennessee, where he died, leaving a widow and several children. The daughters all married, and some of them have large families. Andrew Jenkins died a few years before his wife, and she also died some years ago at Barnesville, Ohio, after having survived all her sisters.

Elizabeth Crosson first married a man

named Potter, by whom she had several children, and after his death she married a Jenkins, distantly related to Andrew. She settled in Hancock, Maryland, and never moved farther west. As above indicated, she reared a family of several children, but the writer of this sketch never made their acquaintance, and never but once saw their mother. She died where she lived.

Mary Crosson married William McFadden. After leaving Pennsylvania, the McFaddens lived for several years in Fayette county, Ohio, near Washington C. H. whence they moved to Delaware county, Indiana. Mr. McFadden died first, and Mrs. McFadden died in Indiana a little more than a quarter of a century ago; but two sons, James and Wesley, still live in that State, as do also two daughters--Cornelia, married to Mr. F. Taylor, and Catherine, married to Mr. Ranck. Both live at Pennville, Ind. James is a local preacher in the church of the United Brethren.

Rhoda Crosson, as has been stated already, was married to Joshua Merrill, in Columbus, Ohio, February 1, 1816. When

her elder sister, Sarah, married Charles Brooks, and moved to Ohio, she came with them, or very shortly afterwards, and was making her home with them when Mr. Merrill came from Cincinnati to Columbus. In the course of human events these two young persons became acquainted and united their destiny in holy wedlock. Rhoda was just coming into womanhood when she left her mother's home in Pennsylvania to join her sister in the unknown experiences of life in the great west, and she carried with her vivid recollections of her earlier days, yet without any sentimental regrets to dampen her pleasures or to weaken her courage, in facing the realities to be met in her new surroundings and new relations. She was of a quiet disposition, of philosophical mind, of serene temperament, patient and well poised, and therefore adapted to accept cheerfully the changes and privations incident to her situation. Her father had died when she was young, and her mother had married again before she left home, so that nothing was more natural than that she should attempt to make her way in the world, depending

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largely on her own judgment, and following the impulses of her will. With this spirit she came to the west, not to depend upon her kindred for her support, as she did not, nor yet to ignore them by entirely separating herself from them; for she loved her mother and sisters with the sincerest affection; but to make her way in life by her own efforts. When she met her future husband she was far from the home of her childhood, as he was from his, and the mutual interest and sympathy which sprang up between them, on comparison of experiences, reached the inevitable consummation when they were joined in marriage. A brief outline of their career after marriage will make the substance of another chapter.

IV.

Their Married Life.

JOSHUA MERRILL and his wife resided in Columbus only one or two years after their marriage. Their first child was born there, and not long after that event they removed to Lebanon, in Warren county, whence, after a short stay, they went to the village of Bellbrook, and in two or three years more to Union county, and lived in the neighborhood where Charles Brooks had settled after leaving Columbus. This move brought the sisters together as neighbors, which was the motive inducing the change from Bellbrook. About this time Andrew Jenkins and his wife came from Belmont county, and took up their residence near by, so that three sisters were close together. This continued till the death of Mrs. Brooks, which broke up the arrangement, and Mr. Jenkins and fam-

ily soon after returned to Belmont county, and Mr. and Mrs. Merrill followed them a few months later. But they remained in eastern Ohio only about three years, living in Belmont and Jefferson counties without permanently settling. In 1826 they went to southern Ohio, moving down the river to Clermont county, where they contented themselves for seven years. In 1833, they removed to Hillsboro, Highland county, where they lived till 1841, when they removed to Greenfield in the same county, and there they continued their stay till the end, and there they are buried.

This brief statement of their places of abode is necessary to explain the register of the births and deaths of their children. It indicates that they were somewhat restless, inclined to try new places, and not to become strongly attached to localities or to old scenes and old associations. There was without doubt something of this kind, either natural or acquired, in the disposition of the head of the family; but it was not characteristic of his wife, who nevertheless humored his inclination, and acquiesced cheerfully in whatever did

not involve principle. These removals often cost her pain, as she was a woman of strong attachments, and loved her friends and neighbors, and her church, with sincere, and yet undemonstrative affection.

After he was married, Mr. Merrill adopted the boot and shoe business, and followed it as long as he lived. He became an excellent workman himself, and devoted himself to his calling with unremitting dilligence, sometimes employing many hands in his manufacturing department, but always superintending what was being done with scrupulous care. He was always industrious, honest and frugal, but never proved to be skillful in accumulating much beyond the current necessities of his growing family. He was never ambitious to be rich; never seemed to think it possible or desirable; but was anxious to live about as well as his neighbors, and to give his children the advantages which the times and the community afforded for education. In these things he was successful, and in this success he was happy, having a comfortable home for himself and family.

After the removal to southern Ohio, before mentioned, correspondence was kept up for a time with the Jenkins family, in Belmont county, and also with others of the kindred, but only for a year or two; for by some changes of residence or of post offices, their letters failed, and they ceased to write. While these changes were taking place with these families in the west, the changes before alluded to were also occuring with Mrs. Merrill's mother and sisters in Pennsylvania, so that communication between them was interrupted. Word reached the friends east that the family down the river was in the cholera epidemic of 1831-2, and the impression prevailed that they were all victims. In this way Mr. and Mrs. Merrill became separated from all their relatives, spending the last twentyfive years of their lives in complete isolation, and without ever hearing again from any of their people. Their children grew up without knowledge of the whereabouts of any of their aunts, uncles or cousins, or of any one outside of their own family who bore any relation to them, which was, of course to them, a matter of regret.

While the father and mother were in health, busy with their daily duties, caring for their children, and seeing them advancing in school, and the older ones growing up and settling in the world for themselves, they did not feel their separation from their relatives so keenly as they did later in life, when it became apparent that they would probably die without recovering the lost connection. Then, when advanced in years, with declining health, and time for thought, they both expressed regrets that they were so situated that they could not know the outcome of life with those they had tenderly loved when children, and whose memory they had always cherished and revered. Both were in impaired health for several years. Mr. Merrill was a victim of asthma, which grew upon him, nearly disabling him for the last ten years of his life. Mrs. Merrill's ailment developed consumption. She was confined to the house, and most of the time to her bed, for twelve months previous to her death. During this time she was fully conscious that her end was approaching, and often spoke of her mother,

and also of her brothers and sisters, from whom she had not heard for so many years. She expressed particular regret that she could not know about her mother's death and burial; for she was satisfied that she was gone, although she had never heard of her death. It would have been an unspeakable comfort to her to have known then what her children learned a few years later.

While she was thus lying sick at her home in Greenfield, with this anxiety about her relatives, her sister Mary, Mrs. McFadden, was living just fourteen miles distant, in the adjoining county of Fayette; and knew about the other branches of the family, and about the later life and death and burial of their mother. But Mrs. McFadden did not know that her long lost sister Rhoda was alive, much less that she was so near and so easily accessible. When the facts became known, as they did a few years after Mrs. Merrill's death, this nearness seemed to intensify the sadness of the situation.

The lost connection between the families was discovered by an incident that might be interpreted as accidental or

providential, according to the way one looks at such things. The oldest son of the family, William W. Merrill, was traveling on business in the State of Indiana, and had occasion to seek entertainment for a night at a farmer's house. In the course of the evening he heard one the young people of the family allude to 'Grandpa Crosson.' The name attracted his attention, and, upon inquiry, learned that the lady of the house had once lived in the family of Nehemiah Crosson, as an adopted daughter, and while she was not related to him, her children had been taught to speak of him respectfully as 'Grandpa Crosson.' From what he learned that night he became satisfied that this 'Grandpa Crossen' was none other than his mother's oldest brother. He obtained Mr. Crosson's address, and instead of opening correspondence at once, being away from home, he wrote the information to his brother, then residing in Portsmouth, Ohio, who immediately sent a letter to the address given, and soon received an answer which proved that the information and conjecture were correct. The Crosson family then lived

near Senecaville, Guernsey county, Ohio, not very far from the old home in Belmont county, where they lived when the correspondence was broken off. Having found this one family, it was not long till correspondence was opened with all the others, disclosing the fact that this brother and four sisters survived Mrs. Merrill, and at the time of her death, March 17, 1850, all were in Ohio, except her sister Elizabeth, who was in Hancock, Maryland, and one sister, before mentioned, lived only fourteen miles distant. This sister, Mrs. McFadden, had moved into Indiana, however, before the opening of the correspondence just described. While she yet lived in Fayette county, Ohio, two miles from Washington court-house, Wm. W. Merrill lived in that town, and attended the same church that the McFaddens attended, and they frequently met at church, and had considerable acquaintance, although the question of family relationships had never come up in conversation between them

Mr. and Mrs. Merrill both died in the. the prime of life. As remarked before, Mrs. Merrill became a victim of consump-

tion, and died in her fifty-fourth year. She attributed her weakness of lungs and final failure to the measles, which she had after she was married and was a mother, and not to constitutional tendency or to special exposure She was of even temper, of great composure of mind, not given to worry or excitement, and, with exemption from the entailed weakness mentioned, might have been expected to reach a good old age. She was a Methodist from childhood, with an intelligent faith, and died as she lived, with a calm and unfaltering trust in the Divine Redeemer.

Joshua Merrill survived her only about fifteen months. His asthmatic trouble had grown upon him so that early in each winter for three or four of his last years, he scarcely expected to see the springtime. He came through the winter of 1850-51, and improved with the warm weather till in May, when dropsy came upon him, and that form of the disease progressed so rapidly that he died June 28th in his 61st year. He was short of stature, large chested, not corpulent, quick of motion, rather excitable and impulsive, but of

sound judgment and of reasonable self-control. He was a Methodist, not demonstrative but sincere, and in his last sickness calm, patient, trustful and joyous, his death being an exceedingly brilliant triumph of grace.



V.

Their Children—Deaths.



OSHUA and Rhoda Crosson Merrill were the parents of thirteen children, of which six died young. Mary Ann, the first daughter, died Sept. 16, 1818. William Brown, the first born, three years old, died October 6, 1820. George Washington, the second son and fourth child, died November 27, 1823, two years old. Joshua, junior, died September 23, 1849, eleven years of age. Besides these, two infants born and died without being named, between 1833 and 1838. There was nothing in the first death to be noted. The little girl was feeble, and sickened and died. The second death, that of the first-born was the result of an accident, always remembered painfully by the parents. A kettle of boiling water fell from the fire and scalded the little boy. Fever ensued, and he

died. The next was a case of poisoning. It occurred at Bellbrook, Ohio. Several little children were at play, in November when vegetation was ripened, and innocently opened some burrs of the Jamestown (gymson,) weed, and finding the seeds sweet to the taste they ate of them, and were all made sick. Little George W. Merrill died. After this there was no death in the family except of the two infants, each of a day, till that of young Joshua, Sept. 23, 1849. This death was peculiarly afflicting to all the family, as it destroyed many bright hopes which his short life had inspired.

He was remarkable for his scholarship and for the ease with which he acquired knowledge. With as much fondness for play as other boys, and nothing precocious about him to be seen in his person or mental makeup, he was further advanced in his studies than any one of his age had been known to be in all that section of country. He was eleven-and-a-half years old, rather small, sprightly and vigorous, without any abnormal development, and enjoyed ordinarily good health till the fatal sickness came upon

him. With all the English branches taught in the common schools, arithmetic, grammar, and geography, he was as familiar and as thoroughly a master as many an old teacher. In his acquaintance with the text books on physiology, natural philosophy and chemistry, he was quite proficient; was well advanced in Latin, and had made a beginning in algebra and Greek. He was also quite beyond his years in his knowledge of American and English history, and of the current literature of the times. Just before he was taken down with his fatal illness he distinguished himself and attracted general attention by his part in the examination passed in the seminary in which he was a pupil, and by his exercises in the public exhibition given by the school. His class-mates in the seminary were from sixteen to twenty-two years of age, yet they all treated him as an equal and when the putrid typhus fever took him away they mourned him as a brother. Seldom has the death of any little boy produced such a sensation in any community, or called forth so many expressions of sincere grief.

This death occurred six months before his mother died, and twenty-one months before the death of his father. There were three brothers and four sisters that survived him, and survived their parents, and among these there was no death until August 3rd 1896. At that date, Eliza, the oldest of the living members of the family, died peacefully, after a brief illness, at the home of her oldest daughter, at the village of Braddyville, in the southwestern part of Iowa, in the 77th year of her age.

Within the recollection of all the brothers and sisters living, Eliza was always the oldest, and therefore the one that bore the burdens, and knew the wants and troubles of the younger members of the household. She was a sister indeed, a counsellor, friend, sympathiser, helper and advocate for all the others, in whatever trials and perplexities came to them in their childhood lives, and as such she was worthy the affection and esteem in which she was held by the younger children after they came to appreciate her sacrifices for them. In some respects, hers was a hard life. While she was yet a girl,

her mother's health was so feeble that the heaviest of the cares of the family came upon her--cares and domestic duties onerous enough to tax the energies of a mature woman. With great cheerfulness and uncomplainingly she stood in her place, the stay of her father, the comfort of her mother, and the companion and strength of all the younger children.

When she married she took other cares and responsibilities. Her husband, a kindly man, light of heart, generous to a fault, and willing to do his part, was never successful in business, and never able to relieve the burdens that came to her as the mother of a rapidly growing family. In spite of occasional exceptions and glimpses of better things, she was always limited for means, and so environed that the utmost patience, industry and economy were necessary to the comfort and respectable appearance of her children. In all these virtues she excelled; and not only did her children appreciate her efforts for them as they grew up, but her husband also, during all the years of their toil together in adverse conditions, felt his obligations for her loyalty, and acknowl-

edged the superiority of her counsels, and the excellence of her spirit. She lived to see her children's children, and many of their grand children, and in her last days had peace, plenty, and comparative freedom from care, and died amongst her own, with the blessings of five scores of descendants upon her. She was converted in the church of her parents when fourteen years of age, and sought and enjoyed the privileges of the church whenever the changing conditions of her life permitted, and died in the joyful hope of the better life in the great hereafter.

Margaret Melissa died in Chicago, Ill., May 28, 1898, after a brief illness, at Wesley hospital, where she had been taken by her brother whom she was visiting, because the physicians advised it, a surgical operation being necessary. Appendicitis developed with remarkable rapidity, and as she was in a reduced condition of vitality by reason of her serious sickness in the preceding February, from which she was scarcely recovered, she was unable to rally from the shock. She was a woman of energy, of patient spirit, devoted to her family and friends, and died in the

christian faith. She was laid to rest in the cemetery at Kossuth, Iowa, near the burial ground of her brother's family.

The foregoing will suffice, so far as the children who died without families of their own are concerned; but the names of Eliza and Melissa will appear with the others, whose family records, with brief sketches, will complete the plan of this writing, the purpose of which is to put the principal facts of the family connections in shape for preservation for the benefit of the generations to come. It is but just, as it is a mournful pleasure, to add to the dates of the birth and death, the brief tribute given to those who lived long enough to manifest any special traits, or to develop positive elements of character.

VI.

Family Record.



OSHUA MERRILL was born in Grafton county, N. H., April 8, 1791; died in Greenfield, Highland county, Ohio, June 28, 1851.

Rhoda Crosson was born in Bedford county, Pennsylvania, May 9, 1796; was married to Joshua Merrill, in Columbus, Ohio, February 1, 1816; died in Greenfield, Ohio, March 17, 1850.

Eliza, the oldest of the children of the above, who lived to be married, was born at Lebanon, O., January 24, 1820. Died at Braddyville, Page county, Iowa, August 3, 1896. She was married in Hillsboro, Ohio, Dec. 4, 1838, to Thomas Murren, who was from the state of Delaware. They lived in Ohio till 1877, when they moved west, stopping awhile in Illinois, but settled in Taylor county, Iowa, where some of their children had gone. Mr.

Murren died August 18, 1887, and was buried at New Market, Iowa. Their children were William, born August 12, 1840; Margaret, born May 20, 1842; John Wesley, born December 16, 1843; Mary Ann, born August 21, 1846; Delia Jane, born October 4, 1847; Rhoda Ann, born June 20, 1850; Charlotte, born April 30, 1853; Joshua, born June 27, 1855; Ella Eliza, born June 19, 1857; Sedora, born October 25, 1859; Melissa, born February 10, 1862; Mary Harriet, born July 5, 1864; But one of these children, Mary Ann, died in infancy; the others grew up and married, and have families; some of the daughters are dead, but no record of these deaths are at hand. Some have large families, and are scattered in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri and Kansas. But to continue the record beyond the births of the grand children of Joshua and Rhoda Merrill, would carry this writing beyond its design. Eliza was buried by the side of her husband, at New Market, Iowa.

William Washington, now the oldest living child, was born in St. Clairsville, Belmont county, Ohio, April 9, 1824. He

bears the name of two deceased brothers, whose records were given in a preceding chapter. He married Miss Frances Baldwin at East Monroe, Highland county, Ohio, November 18, 1845. Their children were Sarah Frances, born June 3, 1847; Ada, born Oct. *16, 1854*; Jessie, born July *16, 1859*; Hattie, born May 9, *1861*. Besides these there were born to them two or three infants which died in infancy, whose names are not given. William followed the business of his father the greater part of his active life. When the war broke out in *1861*, he was one of the first in his county to volunteer, under President Lincoln's call for men for three months' service. After serving out that enlistment, he returned home and readjusted his family affairs and business for a longer absence, and volunteered in the Eighty-first Ohio Regiment, for three years. He served the full term, was in many battles, endured many hardships, and suffered many exposures, but came out safely and was honorably discharged. He knew as little as any man of the emotion of fear, was of patriotic spirit, believed in the cause for which the war

was prosecuted, and made a good soldier, with heart in the end sought. After his discharge from the three years' term, he returned home thinking he had done his full duty, but another call for soldiers became so urgent that he again volunteered and returned to his old regiment, in which he served till the war was over. After the grand review in Washington, in which he took a part, he was again honorably mustered out, and returned to the avocations of peace. His health suffered impairment in the service, so that he has never since been the vigorous man he was before the war. He lives in the village where he was married.

Stephen Mason, the second son that grew to manhood, was born in the village of Mount Pleasant, Jefferson county, Ohio, September *16, 1825*. His earliest recollections are of the home in Clermont county, to which he was moved in infancy. He married Miss Anna Bellmire, in Greenfield, Ohio, July *18, 1848*. His wife, the daughter of John Bellmire, was born in Hagarstown, Maryland, June *20, 1828*. Their children are Charles Blair, born May *23, 1849*, in Brownsville, Licking

county, Ohio; and Edward, born at Maysville, Ky., May *22, 1860.* Charles B. married Rebecca Higgins, in Cincinnati, Ohio, December *18,* 1873. They have a son, Stephen Wiley, and a daughter, Bessie. Edward married Georgina Bibby, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Freeman Bibby, January 18, 1886. They have a son, Stephen Crosson, born June 4, 1887.

Stephen M. is the only one of the family that went into professional life. In 1845 he entered the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, beginning as junior preacher on the Georgetown circuit, then in the Ohio, but now in the Cincinnati Conference. He was admitted on probation in the Ohio Conference, at its session in Piqua, 1846, and has continued actively in the work of the church till the present time. His work was in the regular line of circuits, stations, and districts, till May, 1868, when the General conference elected him editor of the Western Christian Advocate, an official paper of the church, published at Cincinnati, Ohio. He served as editor four years, and was then elected Bishop, by the General Conference of 1872, in Brooklyn, New York.

in which capacity he continues, being since May, 1896, the senior effective Bishop.

In the seminary at South Salem, Ross county, Ohio, and by subsequent private instruction, under the preceptorship of Rev. J. G. Blair, than whom the church has had no more capable educator, he received a start in classical studies which, while not the equivalent of a college course, enabled him to so prosecute his studies in connection with the ministry as to largely overcome the incompleteness of his scholastic training. In 1864 he received the honorary degree of A. M., from the Asbury University; in 1868 the degree of D. D. was conferred on him by three different Institutions--the Mount Union college, the Ohio University, and the Ohio Wesleyan University, and in 1888, that of LL. D. was given him by the Northwestern University, and the Iowa Wesleyan University, and two years later by the Ohio Wesleyan University.

The exactions of official duties have not permitted large adventures in authorship, but he has written several books,

some of which have become standards in their sphere, have been translated into the German and Scandinavian languages and have had a wide circulation. Their titles are 'Christian Baptism,' 'The New Testament Idea of Hell,' 'Aspects of Christian Experience,' 'The Second Coming of Christ,' 'A Digest of Methodist Law,' 'Outline Thoughts on Prohibition,' 'The Organic Union of American Methodism,' Mary of Nazareth,' The Crisis of This World, or The Dominion and Doom of the Devil.' His contributions to the periodical press, secular and religious, have been numerous. In official work he has traveled extensively throughout the states and territories of the Union; through Mexico, China, Japan, and India; and through all the European countries in which American Methodism has churches; also visiting Palestine and Egypt. His residence since 1877, has been in Chicago.

Cornelia Ann was born in Clermont county, Ohio, December 11, 1827; was married to Thomas Davis, a native of Ireland, in Greenfield, Ohio, October 22, 1846, and had children as follows: Margaret, born November 5, 1847; William

F. born October 22, 1849; Mary Jane, born July 19, 1852; Samuel S., born July 5, 1854; infant not named, born September 13, 1855; Eliza E., born November 13, 1857; Martha A., born March 4, 1859; James W., born February 19, 1861; Henry Wilbur, born November 18, 1869; Hattie, born, October 5, 1873. William, Samuel, Eliza, and Martha died in childhood, and James W. when nearly 27 years old. Thomas Davis, the father of these children, died at Mediapolis, Iowa, March 18, 1895. He was a substantial citizen, an industrious man, a generous supporter of christian institutions, and held the office of Ruling Elder in the Presbyterian Church at the time of his death. He moved his family from Ohio to Iowa in 1852, and settled at Northfield, where he engaged in the woolen manufacturing business for a number of year, and was fairly successful in his undertaking. After retiring from the active business of life, they removed to Mediapolis, where Mrs. Davis still lives. Margaret, the oldest daughter, married Joseph Benson Downer. They live in Muscatine and have several children and grand children

Mary and her husband, Thomas Giles, with their children, live at Mediapolis. They have a daughter married. Hattie Davis married Mr. James White. They also live at Mediapolis. Henry Wilbur lives with his mother.

Helen Fee was born in Clermont county, Ohio, January 30, 1830. She was married to Joshua Shockley at Greenfield, Ohio, November 1, 1850. Their children are Marietta, born September 5, *1851*; Florence, born July 31, 1853, Wilhelmina, born April *17, 1856*; George Clayton, born July July *27, 1858*; Henry Merrill, born March *10, 1869*. This child died August *29, 1870*. All the others are married and live at Danville, Illinois. Marietta married Henry Wood, a successful farmer in Vermillion county. He is now retired from business, and his son Ray lives on and manages the farm. They have a daughter, Ethel, at home. Florence married Frank B. Smith, a florist and fruit grower at Danville, Ill. They have three sons and one daughter. The boys, Raymond, Joseph and Herbert, were all soldiers in Battery A, Illinois Volunteers, and served in Porto Rico during the

Spanish-American war. Wilhelmina married Asa M. Bushnell, now a prominent business man in Danville. They also have three sons and one daughter. George Clayton is married, and has a family of five daughters. They live in Danville. Mr. and Mrs. Shockley moved from their home in Ohio to Vermillion county, Ill., in *1861*, and have lived there since that time. Their home for many years has been at the village of Bismarck.

James Warren was born in Moscow, Clermont county, Ohio, July 31, 1833. He married Jessie R. Telfer, at Northfield, Des Moines county, Iowa, December 17, 1863. His wife, the oldest daughter of Alexander and Margaret (Robertson) Telfer, was born in Dundee, Scotland, April 11, 1839. They had children as follows: Minerva Alexena, born at Northfield, Iowa, September 30, 1864; Anna May, born at New Boston, Illinois, February 9, 1867; Stephen Curtis, born at New Boston, Ill., June 6, 1870, Joshua Francis, born at Northfield, Iowa, December 4, 1874; Thomas Arthur, born at Mediapolis, Iowa, January 2, 1878; an infant, unnamed, born in *1880*: Oak

Emmer, born at Mediapolis, Iowa, June *19, 1882*; Vida Helen, born at Mediapolis, April 4, 1885. Of these, Joshua Francis died August 3, 1876; and their first-born, Minerva Alexena, died April 5, 1883. Stephen Curtis married Miss Ida B. Hutchcroft, of Mediapolis, Iowa, May 23, 1894. They have one child, named Floyd Ellis, born July 10, 1895.

After the death of his parents, as related in a preceding chapter, James Warren went to Washington c. h., and learned the printing trade. He subsequently traveled through several states, working and adding to his knowledge of the art, until 1863, when he married and became settled in life. In 1875 he moved to Mediapolis where he has since lived, and has been continuously engaged in the publication of a semi-weekly newspaper, The New Era. He served a short term in the army in Co. G, Forty-fifth Iowa Infantry, but from physical defects in his feet, was unable to take part in more active service. He has written and published in an octavo volume, a history of two townships, Yellow Spring and Huron—in the county (Des Moines), in which he resides.

Margaret Melissa was born in Highland county, Ohio, July 12, 1840. She was married to Emmer Jefferis, in Belmont county, Ohio, May 10, 1860. Their children were: Curtis, born February 16, 1861; Welby, born November 16, 1862. Mr. Jefferis died February 24, 1870. She subsequently moved from Ohio to Iowa, and lived in Wapello, where she was married to George F. Thomas, August 14, 1872. They had one daughter, Grace, born October 24, 1875. Her oldest son died shortly after her second marriage. Mr. Thomas died July 17, 1889. Welby married Miss Emma Herron, and they have two boys, Frank and Oak. They live in South Dakota. Grace was married to Harry F. Hendershott, October 19, 1895, and lives in Missouri. As noted elsewhere, Melissa died in Chicago, May 28, 1898, while on a visit to her brother.

Such is the record, up to date, of this one family bearing the name of Merrill—a family whose lives, through the inscrutible providence of God, have been kept apart from all the others of the name whose kinship can be traced with any assured accuracy.



NOTICE.



THE blank sheets with their several headings, which follow this printed record, are placed there for the convenience of those who desire to continue the record of their own families, or to record the names of some of Joshua Merrill's descendants, omitted in the foregoing pages, because of the limited scope of the work. It is a Record which may be preserved with greater convenience and safety than by the usual method of writing them in the family Bible.

BIRTHS.

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